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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Cailf.

**March 26, 2004** 

## Marines, Army unite in Iraq to fight fires

Story by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III

MWHS-3 Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq - There is a long-standing, unwritten rivalry between the different services of the American armed forces, but one thing is certain; everyone is fighting on the same team, for the same reasons.

The Marine Wing Support Squadron 273 Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting technicians and the Army's 767 Engineer Team from the Iowa National Guard work together to show how a little teamwork can help protect an area as large as Al Asad, Iraq.

This team of firefighters has been trained at the same school in Texas but go on to learn how their branch of the service deals with fire emergencies.

For Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brian S. Becker and his crew of Marines, this is somewhat of a new experience.

"We are integrating the Marines with the Army to cross-train them," said the 33-year-old Miramar, Fla., native. "We are mutually supporting agencies; we would support them in the event of a structure fire, and they would support us in the event of an airfield incident.

"In the meantime, we are sending one Marine team with the Army to learn how to battle structural fires, and the Army has sent a team to learn aircraft, rescue and firefighting," he added.

According to another senior member of the ARFF crew, Master Sgt. Michael F. Derobertis, a 39-year-old Island Park, N.Y., native, the Army has an advantage over the Marines when it comes to battling structure fires because the Marines mainly deal with airfield operations.

"Cross-training the Marines and the soldiers together will give everyone the advantage," he said. "We (Marines) will give the Army the chance to have a presence on the airfield while the Army will



Lance Cpls. Thomas J. Titus, a 20-year-old Port Huron, Mich., native, and William C. McDonald, a 21-year-old Anaheim, Calif., native, both Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting technicians with the 'Sweathogs' of Marine Wing Support Squadron 273, spray a stream of water on an Iraqi anti-aircraft gun March 18 in Al Asad, Iraq. The Marines are in Al Asad working with the Army's 767 Engineer Team to fight any type of fire that could occur here. The MWSS-273 Marines are based out of Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., and the 767 Engineer Team is an Army National Guard unit from Johnston, Iowa. Photo by Sgt. J. L. Zimmer III

give the Marines a chance to be seen around the base camps."

According to Marines and soldiers standing watch on the flightline and inside the firehouse, there is a mutual respect between the two services' firefighters.

Lance Cpl. Graham J. Strebler, an MWSS-273 crash crewman from Rolling Meadows, Ill., has enjoyed the training they have conducted and believes the two services are working together well.

"I have worked with the Air Force in the past," said the 19 year

old. "We can benefit from the Army's knowledge of firefighting. Even though the surroundings are different, this is adding resources to the Marine Corps while we need them the most."

For one soldier, Pfc. Adam J. Warner, a 21-year-old firefighter with the 767 Engineer Team, the experience is very positive.

"You get the mixture of the services instead of the inter-service rivalry," said the Des Moines, Iowa, native. "We do things differently as firefighters than the Marines, but we all work together."

Another soldier, Spc. Brett A. Almburg, said his experience as a civilian firefighter is helping him train the Marines.

"It's a good thing we are working together," said the 26-year-old Ottumwa, Iowa, native. "The Marines are primarily trained in ARFF, and most of the Army National Guardsmen are civilian firefighters when we are not on active duty. We have a lot of experience in extrication and structural firefighting and we can teach each other about our separate jobs."

For Marine Staff Sgt. Curtis P.

Delpesh, he knows that things can be difficult, but the Marines and soldiers are working things out fine.

"We have our different methods of how to do things," said the 31-year-old Naples, Fla., native. "The Marines have a different response time to a crash than the Army, but we are working together on how to come to a mutual agree-

In February, more than 650 MWSS-273 Marines deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II and the global war on terrorism.

## Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station







Saturday



Colors in Iraq



Marine completes her goal



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## DoD authorizes new Korean Defense Service Medal for servicemembers

Story compiled by CPAO

MCAS Miramar

The Department of Defense recently authorized the wear of the Korean Defense Service Medal to servicemembers who served on the peninsula.

To be eligible for the medal, a servicemember must have been in theater for 30 consecutive or 60 nonconsecutive days. The theater of operations include all land on the Republic of Korea, all air space above the peninsula and all waters up to 12 nautical waters around the peninsula.

The medal can be granted for shorter tours of duty if the servicemember was engaged in combat.

According to an official Marine Corps press release, more than 40,000 members of the U.S. armed forces have served in the Republic of Korea or the waters adjacent thereto each year since the signing of the cease-fire agreement in July 1953, which established the Demilitarized Zone.

The medal will be dark green, which represents the land of Korea, blue, indicating overseas service and commitment to achieving peace, gold, denoting excellence and white,

symbolizing idealism and integrity.

The front of the medal will feature a Korean "circle dragon" within an encircling scroll inscribed with "Korea Defense Service Medal." The four-clawed dragon is a traditional symbol of Korea and represents intelligence and strength of purpose. It will also show a sprig of laurel to denote honorable endeavor and victory and bamboo to refer to the land of Korea.

The back is a representation of the landmass of Korea surmounted by two swords points up within a circlet garnished of five points to signify the de-

fense of freedom in that country and the readiness to engage in combat to that end. The circlet enclosing the device recalls the forms of five-petal symbols common in the Korean armory.

For more information on the Korean Defense Service Medal, refer to Marine Administrative Message 120/04.



Story compiled by CPAO

MCAS Miramar

Headquarters Marine Corps recently released Marine Administrative Message 129/04 announcing the approval of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and providing administrative guidance and procedures for implementation of the award.

President George W. Bush approved the establishment and award of the GWOTEM and Global War on Terrorism Service Medal to recognize the accomplishments of military servicemembers participating or supporting operations in the Global War on Terrorism within an established area of eligibility.

The GWOTSM approval will be announced in a separate MarAdmin message.

To qualify for the GWOTEM, Marines must have deployed abroad for service in support of GWOT operations beginning Sept. 11, 2001, to a future date to be determined. Approved operations for the GWOTEM are Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

The secretary of defense, in consultation with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has the authority to approve/designate future operations eligible for the GWOTEM. Future approved operations will be announced in a separate MarAdmin message.

The general AOE for this award encompasses all foreign land, water and air spaces outside the 50 states of the United States and outside 200 nautical miles of the shores of the U.S.

Establishing presence in the AOE does not necessarily qualify a unit for this award. For example, a Marine Security Guard unit on embassy duty within the AOE must also establish that it meets the criteria to qualify for this award outlined in the MarAdmin.

Marines must be assigned, attached or mobilized to a unit participating in OEF or OIF for 30 consecutive or 60

nonconsecutive days within the designated AOE, or while in the designated AOE, meet one of the following criteria:

- Be engaged in actual combat against the enemy and under circumstances involving grave danger or serious bodily injury from enemy action.

- While participating in the operation, regardless of time, is killed, wounded or injured requiring medical evacuation from the operation.

- Marines participating as a regularly assigned aircrew member flying sorties into, out of, within, or over the AOE in direct support of OEF and/or OIF are eligible to qualify for award of the expeditionary medal. Each day that one or more sorties are flown in accordance with these criteria shall count as one day toward the 30 or 60 day requirement.

The GWOTEM may be awarded posthumously.

Marines may receive both the GWOTEM and the GWOTSM if they meet the requirements of both awards, however, the qualifying period used to establish eligibility for one cannot be used to justify eligibility for the other.

The GWOTEM is a service award. Like the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or the Armed Forces Service Medal, not all personnel in an approved unit may be eligible - timing, place and action are required.

Only one award of this medal may be authorized for any individual, therefore, no devices (service stars) are authorized.

Battle stars may be applicable for personnel who were engaged in actual combat against the enemy under cir-

See **GWOTEM**, page 11

## Miramar Mail



"Are there any Marine Corps programs that provide Marines and Sailors an alternative to driving drunk?"
Petty Officer 2nd Class A. Batten Seat Shop VMFAT-101

Station Order 5100.5 provides policy and guidance for participation in the Miramar Arrive Alive Program. The AAP allows intoxicated or stranded active duty members a method to arrive safely at their residence or MCAS Miramar. Station activities are required to utilize the station AAP. The use of AAP will not be viewed as negative, but rather as a good decision in the interest of good order and discipline.

A participating active duty member in need of safe transportation to their residence will call the contract cab company and request transportation. Upon pick up, the cab driver will verify the AAP card using the member's military ID. At the completion of the trip, the cab driver will fill out the billing statement. The active duty member will verify the information, total it, add gratuity (if desired) and return the bill to the driver. The driver will retain the AAP card and the original bill and provide a copy of the bill or receipt to the member. The cab company will submit the bill and the AAP card to Marine Corps Community Services for payment. The member will report the use of the AAP card to the unit representative the next working day and make payment to the unit representative no later than two working days after the next military payday.

Payment will immediately be forwarded from the unit representative to the cab company via the MCCS coordinator. Failure of the active duty member to pay may result in their unit being recommended for removal from the program. The individual member is responsible for lost or stolen cards until reported to their unit.

For more information on attaining a AAP card and the program, contact your unit safety officer.

### **Editor's note:**

E-mail your questions to the Commanding General,
Marine Corps Air Station Miramar at:
ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil
Please include "Question to the General"
in the subject line.

## FLIGHT

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# Defense commissaries sell groceries at cost

**Story by Bonnie Powell** 

Defense Commissary Agency

FORT LEE, Va. – No pain, no gain is a common expression. Bargain hunters go from grocery store to grocery store seeking the best buys - but they may also end up paying more for other items that aren't on sale. A lot of pain, not much gain. Why do all that when Defense Commissary Agencies sell groceries at cost, saving authorized customers an average of 30 percent or more over commercial grocery prices?

Commercial stores are profit-motivated. They can offer popular items at below cost to get customers in their store - and make it up on other items that are priced much higher. There's nothing wrong with that, and it has a name: loss leader.

That's how the commercial businesses work. "But commissaries are a benefit, not a business, and sometimes people lose sight of that," said Maj. Gen. Mike Wiedemer, DeCA director. "It's true we operate in a businesslike fashion, but our sole reason for being here is to deliver the benefit. Our cost is your cost."

The prices paid by commissary customers for grocery items equals the government's cost for those items.

"Because we sell at cost, and the U.S. government covers the expenses associated with providing the benefit, that allows us to achieve an overall average customer savings of 30 percent or more over commercial grocery stores," Wiedemer said.

That's a benefit that is now worth about \$2,700 a year to a military family of four that shops regularly at a commissary. Put simply, "We're here to save military families as much as we can - not make money," said Wiedemer.

Like any commercial grocery store, commissaries also have unadvertised "sales" on hundreds of products on any given day, according to Scott Simpson, chief operating officer at DeCA.

"One of the many reasons we don't have a 'frequent shopper' card is simply that everything we sell is already at cost. If a manufacturer offers us a special sale, we pass it on. Your military ID is the only 'special card' you need," he said. "If an item is on sale, it's on sale for every authorized shopper who walks into the store."

Sometimes getting sales information to customers about what's on sale at the commissary is difficult. Commissaries are not allowed to advertise product prices. But private vendors and manufacturers doing business in the commissary system can, and increasingly do, advertise products and prices. Many installation newspapers now carry monthly commissary shopping circulars; other vendors distribute sales information direct to the doorways of military families in housing areas. Still more hand out circulars and coupons at the door of the local commissary.

Customers can also find out what's on sale at their local commissary by accessing the savings aisle in the shopping section of DeCA's Web site www.commissaries.com. Prices aren't listed, but it's a safe bet that if the items are on sale, the prices are going to be below average commissary prices and well below commercial grocery store prices.

Commissary customers get an additional break by not paying any sales tax when shopping at the commissary. In some locations, that can amount to sizeable savings.

There is one cost borne by customers. A 5-percent surcharge, mandated by Congress, is added at the register on the total grocery bill before coupons are deducted.

"We're frequently asked about the surcharge because people feel like that's part of the cost of the groceries or some sort of profit," said Wiedemer. "But the surcharge funds have nothing to do with making a 'profit.' The 5-percent surcharge goes right back into the military system to fund the building of new commissaries and the improvement of existing stores for our customers," he said.

Commissary customer satisfaction surveys consistently rank the commissary as the number one military benefit, and military quality of life surveys consistently rank commissaries among the top two benefits, said Wiedemer.

"Our intention is to spread the word and make sure the commissary benefit is being fully used by active duty, Guard and Reserve, and retired military families," he said. "It simply doesn't make sense for anyone to spend valuable time and gas running all over town to save on a few items when shopping regularly at the commissary can result in savings of 30 percent or more!"



## **Fallen Marine honored**

Story by Staff Sgt. A.C. Mink

MAG-16 Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq – Inside the hollow walls of an abandoned aircraft bunker, Marines and Sailors gathered Thursday, to pay tribute to Cpl. Andrew Brownfield, killed in action here March 18 in the Al Anbar Province of Western Iraq.

"Andy lived to make other people smile," said Cpl. Stephen S. O'Rourke, Brownfield's friend and fellow aviation ordnance systems technician with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37, during his tearful memorial.

Brownfield arrived in country approximately one month ago. His unit was assigned to Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. MWSS-374 is based at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif.

"Corporal Brownfield was an outstanding ordnanceman and truly a professional Marine," said Lt. Col. Peter L. Bowling, MALS-16 commanding officer of the 24-year-old Summit, Ohio, native. "He always knew the right thing to do and never faltered in his morals to make the right decision. He always volunteered for the tough assignments and was totally dedicated to his fellow ordnance Marines and the Corps."



Cpl. Andrew Brownfield

Col. Stuart Knoll, MAG-16 commanding officer and honored guest, said in an earlier interview, "I know these things happen, but it is never easy for fellow Marines and Sailors."

Many in the group had tears in their eyes and nodded in agreement as Maj. Gen. James F. Amos, commanding general, 3rd MAW, addressed the group and said in closing, "None of us joined to give our lives ... but there are some things that are more important than life itself"

"Corporal Brownfield volunteered to come to Iraq ... This Marine deserves a lasting place in your memory," said Amos. "I thank God for him and Marines like him."

## 1st Marine Division colors fly again in Iraq

Story by Cpl. Paula M. Fitzgerald

1st MarDiv Combat Correspondent

CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, Iraq - The scarlet and gold of 1st Marine Division's colors was unfurled and a new page in the history book begun as the Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.-based unit relieved the Army's 82nd Airborne Division during a relief-in-place ceremony here March 20.

Maj. Gen. James N. Mattis, 1st Marine Division commanding general, formally assumed responsibility of the Al Anbar and Northern Babil provinces from Army Maj. Gen. Charles H. Swannack Jr., 82nd Airborne Division commanding general. The relief-in-place ceremony was held at the division's headquarters in Ar Ramadi, about a two-hour drive west of Baghdad.

"Using our individual initiative, courage, moral judgment and battle skills, we will build on the 82nd Airborne's victories," said Mattis, who led the division during the fight to Baghdad and subsequent operations in southern Iraq last year. "The soldiers with the 82nd Airborne have been magnificent."

The 18,000 soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division making up Task Force All American, based out of Fort Bragg, N.C., served in Iraq since the middle of last year and accomplished a multitude of operational achievements.

According to Swannack, the unit conducted nearly 600 company-size or larger operations resulting in the capture of more than 30 high-value enemy targets.

The division also trained and equipped 10 Iraqi Border Police battalions, six Iraqi Civil Defense Corps battalions, and nearly 5,000 local policemen. Almost 24,000 jobs were created for the citizens here in order to ease chronic unemployment issues.

"The soldiers of the 82nd Airborne, along with our Iraqi partners, have helped to shape Iraq into a sovereign country with strong economic growth," Swannack said. "First Marine Division is just as committed to building on the relationship we have made with the Iraqis."

Addressing the Iraqi leaders who attended the ceremony, Mattis added Marines have "come to listen, to learn and to assist the people here, especially the civil defense and police warriors."



Maj. Gen. James N. Mattis, commanding general of 1st Marine Division, and Sgt. Maj. Wayne R. Bell, the division sergeant major, uncase the "Blue Diamond's" colors during a relief-in-place ceremony March 20 at Camp Blue Diamond, Iraq. The Camp Pendleton, Calif.-based unit relieved the Army's 82nd Airborne Division of its duties in this war-torn country. In all, nearly 20,000 Marines will conduct security and stabilization operations in the region to turn over full power of Iraq to its citizens. *Photo by Cpl. Paula M. Fitzgerald* 

He reassured the audience of Iraqi government and military officials as well as sheiks and prominent civic officials that anyone who attempts to thwart 1st Marine Division's plans to help the people here will "pay severely."

"Working in conjunction with fledgling Iraqi Security Forces," Mattis explained, "We will move precisely against the enemy elements and crush them without harming the innocent." Most of the Marines from the "Blue Diamond" were here in 2003 during the war and are prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

Mattis said his goal is to maintain the friendly relationship with the Iraqis in order to secure the country's future and, more importantly, the future of Iraq's children.

He closed his speech by saying, "The division is ready to carry out any and all orders."

# Marine Corps first lieutenant remembered for a zest for life with purpose

Story By Cpl. Kristen L. Tull

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

'I thank God that I've lived.'

That was the name of a poem dedicated to 1st Lt. Russell N. Bates by his brother, Simon, at his memorial ceremony held at the Airmen Memorial Chapel here.

Bates, a 26-year-old helicopter pilot

from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 166, along with Casey Ferrone, a 25-yearold teacher, died when their single-engine plane crashed shortly after leaving North Las Vegas Airport en route to San Diego.

"He died doing what he loved. At the age of four, he loved helicopters and flying. Russell lived his dream," said Navy Chaplain Lt. John Logan.

Bates was born in London where he lived and studied until he joined the United States Marine Corps in 2000. When he completed his training, he earned his Wings of Gold and selected the CH-46E "Battle Phrog."

"He established his reputation as a great aviator and leader of Marines," said Lt. Col. Will Guthrie, commanding officer of HMM-166. "He didn't have to raise his voice in order to be heard. These are the qualities we search for in a pilot and an officer."

His roommate, 1st Lt. Joe Ludick, remembers his friendship and uncanny sense of humor

"Russ spoke so highly of his mom and dad when we were roommates. When I met them, it was obvious how much his mannerisms were modeled after his parents," said Ludick. "He was our brother in the squadron, and we will miss him."

Family and friends flew in from all parts of the world to honor his memory.

"I can't imagine a life without Russ," said Simon. "I know there will be less laughter and less love, because that's what Russ was full of. He'd become my best friend and my confident, I admired and respected him. Anytime I got to big for myself, he'd put me in my place."

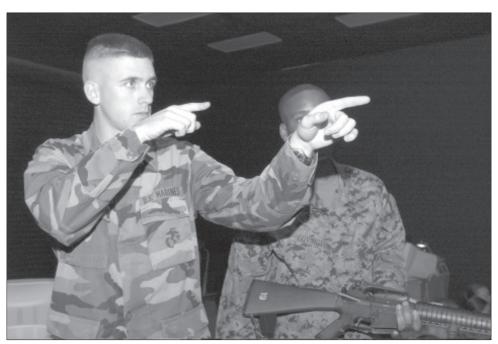
His brother said he was happier with 166



1st Lt. Russell N. Bates, pilot, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 166, was born and raised in London, where he lived until he joined the Marine Corps in 2000. Bates and a friend, Casey Ferrone, died when their single-engine plane crashed shortly after leaving North Las Vegas Airport en route to San Diego. *Photo courtesy of the Bates family* 

than he had ever been.

"He found his purpose in life and that gives us comfort," said Simon. "I know he'll live again through the love of my family. He is now my inspiration, the monkey on my back telling me to do what's right."



Cpl. Jonathan Lee, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer operator, explains the fundamentals of a good shot to a shooter during training inside the facility. *Photo by Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro* 

## ISMT instructor assists Marines with rifle skills

Story by Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Instructors at Miramar's Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer can be key factors in ensuring Marines get the points they need for promotion.

Cpl. Jonathan Lee is one of those instructors, and although the fifth award expert shooter can put rounds down range more accurately than most Marines can fathom, Lee hasn't spent his whole career behind the rifle.

When Lee first joined the Marine Corps out of his hometown of Redondo Beach, Calif., his original intentions were to join the ranks of Force Reconnaissance. Lee was unable to join reconnaissance at the time and was sent to Ft. Leonardwood, Mo., to attend Drafting and Surveying School.

While in training, Lee strived to take in as much information as he could.

"We learned mostly automated drafting, because about 90 percent of our work is done on computers, but we also learned manual drafting," he said.

After he graduated school, he was assigned to Marine Wing Support Squadron 172 at Camp Foster, Okinawa, Japan, for his first duty station. While in Okinawa, Lee learned the ins and outs of his job during training exercises such as Exercise Balikatan in the Philippines and Millennium Edge in Guam.

"During Balikatan I was assigned to a construction platoon, and during Millennium Edge we had to design and build a 400-man camp with a runway for the (Marine Expeditionary Unit)," he said.

Lee got a real taste of his job Jan. 3, 2003, when he deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with MWSS-373. From central Kuwait to Tikrit and right through Saddam's Palace, Lee supported the construction of a 4,000-man camp with 430

A-frame tents.

After he returned May 26, 2003, Lee was informed that his squadron needed to send a Marine to Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron to serve as a rifle coach. Lee, being more than qualified, decided to be that Marine.

After two and a half months of working at the rifle range here, Lee was assigned to the ISMT where he has worked ever since and has enjoyed every moment.

"It feels really good to help Marines that don't get to handle weapons every day," said Lee. "It is also a lot more relaxed than the range. It is really fun here."

Although Lee now handles weapons on a daily basis, he hasn't always been a marksman.

"I never really shot much when I was growing up besides a few times in (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) and a couple times with relatives," Lee said. "Shooting is just something that came naturally for me."

When Lee is helping others with their aim, in a sense he is working on his own, as he is an avid paintball player and recreational golfer.

Now that Lee's contract is almost up, he is considering his options as a Marine while looking out for his future.

"I would like to try to move into the military police or aviation field so I will have something to take to the civilian sector when I get out," he said.

According to Sgt. Jay Garcia, ISMT noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Lee will have no problems with whatever path he decides to take in his Marine Corps career.

"Lee always does his job, he is always squared away, locked on and is really fun to work with," said Garcia. "He likes to joke around and keep spirits up, but also knows when it is time to be serious. He is just a really good Marine."



## Exercise OPSEC

Commentary by Staff Sgt. A.C. Mink

MAG-16 Combat Correspondent

"Hey baby, what's up?" says Cpl. Joe Marine to his girlfriend.

"Nothing baby. What's going on? Where are you? I heard something happened to some Marines. Are you okay?"

"I'm not really supposed to say, but..."

Stop. Stop right there. Do the words operational security mean anything to you? They should. They may save your life or the life of your fellow Marines and Sailors.

Talking in the chow hall about the number of sorties you are going to fly next week may seem like innocent conversation, but in the right hands, information like that can undermine missions and cost lives.

The Internet is a fabulous tool and great way to keep in contact with family and friends – whether you're in the states or deployed.

However, the Internet is not a secure means of communication. Once released on the web, vital information is made available to anyone who has a computer and a little time on their hands.

The same is true for the information shared over telephones, cellular phones and digital cameras.

Those are great, aren't they? You take a picture of yourself standing in front of the 53s all neatly lined up. It's a bonus if you get the tower in the background, and you even got some cool local landmarks in the shot.

Your high school photography instructor would be so proud, and your girlfriend is going to love how cool you look in your desert digis.

So you e-mail her the photo and send it to your Mom too ... who sends it to your Aunt Sarah, who sends it to her church group, who post it to their webpage titled "Our deployed Marines."

Now everyone can see you and how cool you look in your desert digis, even those anti-coalition supporters with ties to the terrorists.

Worried yet? You should be. Because you also showed them exactly where the tower is and how many helos we have sitting on the tarmac.

According to Department of Defense regulation, all photos taken aboard a military installation must be cleared by the Public Affairs Office before they can be posted on a public, or private, Web site.

Public Affairs isn't the self-appointed photo police, and PAO has no interest in taking away the photo of you and your bros riding in the humvee.

However, a picture speaks a thousand words ... and one photo can tell volumes about your installation and the people on it.

See OPSEC, page 11

## Chapel invites all for singing, fun

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

There is a place open to all, where free pizza, refreshments, movies, live music and fun can be enjoyed in a relaxing atmosphere.

The Airmen Memorial Chapel here hosts a pizza and movie social every Sunday from 5:30 to 8 p.m. for anyone interested.

"I wanted to find a way to reach the Corps. The social is a great alternative to doing nothing," said Navy Capt. David A. Starkey, station chaplain. "People who normally wouldn't come to church could come and have a good time. Everybody enjoys good music, movies and food."

The Albuquerque, N.M., native created the social to give Marines and Sailors something to do on Sunday evenings.

"It's a relaxing place to come to on a Sunday night versus spending the day in the barracks," said Gunnery Sgt. Tomas P. Villanueva, personnel administrative chief at Marine Aircraft Group 11, who attended his first social last Sunday. "I think the chapel is a great place to come to bring a unit closer. I am going to encourage my Marines to come here."

Upon entering, everyone is greeted with a comforting and welcoming smile. Live musicians play while Marines, Sailors and friends can socialize with one another.

A table full of pizza, buffalo wings, breadsticks and soda is free for the taking at the back table.

People can come in and have a good time without spending a dime, declared

Before the movie begins, Starkey gives a brief synopsis of the film. At the end, he



Melanie Kettner (left) and Clifford T. Fleischbein entertain guests with their musical talents at the Airmen Memorial Chapel here Sunday. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

reviews the underlying themes of the

"The messages in the movies we show can be applied to our own lives," said

Floyd Griffin, one of the musicians for the evening, said the weekly social is a "wholesome way to connect with people."

For more information, contact the Miramar Chaplain's Office at 577-1333.

### Female Marine finishes combat course

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - First impressions are imperative, especially in the Marine

And no one knows that better than Sgt. Norma Garcia, one of two female squad instructors who recently completed the Marine Combat Instructors Course here and will soon teach Marine Combat Training.

The Marine combat instructor will not only give her students going through MCT an outstanding example of an iron-willed Marine, but she may also be one of the first examples of a female Marine they encounter.

"Marines who go through MCT on the West Coast are not used to seeing a female squad instructor," said the Ocotlan Jaslisco, Mexico, native. "I wanted to change that."

Sgt. Maj. Aaron L. Banks, MCT Battalion sergeant major, said Marines like Garcia have raised the bar and are a great example for Marines to follow.

"The female Marine leaders who are currently here, and those who've already served a tour, possess those intangible and immeasurable traits which fuel and drive our Corps to the point of distinction which forces others to have no choice but to take notice," he added.

Garcia has the highest physical fitness test score in her class of approximately 46 students with a 297. In addition to current triumphs, she was the 2003 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year for the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

Her Marine Corps story began July 19, 1999, where she "joined for the challenge."

"If someone tells me 'It's too hard' I'll say 'OK' and do it," explained Garcia.

Staff Sgt. John A. Craig, MCIC instructor, said Garcia always steps up to the plate when it comes to doing extra work and volunteering.

After completing recruit training, Garcia served in Okinawa as a training clerk, then as an aviation operations specialist at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. Later, Garcia worked at the Department of Safety and Standardization at 3rd MAW.

While stationed at Miramar, Garcia learned that there were openings for female instructors at MCT. At the time, she had no idea that she would be the first female to go through the seven-week course.

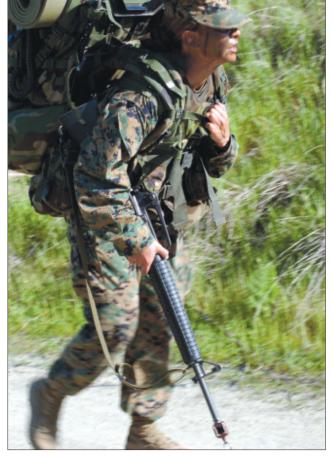
"I've always wanted to teach and influence younger Marines," said Garcia. "I care about the future of the Marine Corps."

Garcia said being an instructor will give her a chance to show junior Marines a positive image of the Corps, and she will do that best by leading by example.

"If I can inspire even 10 percent of the Marines who come through this course, I'll be satisfied," she added.

Although Garcia encountered bumps along the way to a new career path, she continued to pursue her dreams.

"If there's something you want in life, go for it. Don't let weaknesses stop you. If you put your heart into your goals, anything is possible," she concluded.



Sgt. Norma Garcia completes the 15k forced march during the final portion of the Marine Combat Instructors Course. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

## MALS-16 aviation keeps parts flying in

Story by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte

MAG-16 Marine Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq – A squad of Marine infantrymen are stuck in a hostile landing zone. They have two wounded who need medical attention.

The only helicopter within the flight radius is spraying hydraulic fluid all over the crew. They need one simple hydraulic hose to get the bird in the air.

The mission, should the supply Marine choose to accept it, is to get the part to the air crew so they can extract that team of Marines.

This is not an ordinary day in the office for an aviation supply clerk in Marine Aviation Logistics

Squadron 16, according to Sgt. Robtrey Gamble, Material Management Division noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

However, this scenario could fall under the parameters of their mission if it ever came up, the 24-year-

old sergeant said. He added that the mission of supply is very broad.

"Our job is to support every squadron of (Marine Aircraft Group 16) so they can make their flights," Gamble said. "We get them whatever they need to get the aircraft in the air and keep them there."

MALS-16 has set up multiple divisions, or departments, within its supply system that work together to accomplish this mission.

The head division, or overseer, is the Supply Management Division. This division ensures that all others are doing what they are supposed to being doing, Gamble stated.

Under the SMD is the Maintenance Management

Division, or MMD. This shop is responsible for issuing any consumable or repairable items.

Gamble explained that when the squadrons need something, aviation supply will get it.

"The squadrons themselves will order the part," he said. "From something as simple as a washer all the way to an aircraft engine."

The first place the Marines will look to find an item is within the supply system itself. If MMD cannot locate the part in the Marine Corps system, they refer it to the Supply Research Division.

Their job is to find the hard stuff, said Gamble.

'Being out here makes me understand

my job better (and) why my job matters

overall. I think you have to go through

something like this to understand that.'

Lance Cpl. Ricardo D. Rucker

"They refer the contracts to aircraft manufacturers or anybody that has the necessary parts," he explained. "If

something breaks and we can't get the part, they find out what's needed, find it and track it until it gets here."

This is where all the technical research takes place, the San Diego native said.

In the shadows of the whole operation, the Supply Accounting Division keeps tabs on all the paperwork, Gamble remarked.

"They are in charge of the paper trail," he explained.
"They make sure the paperwork is in order and everything is in check. They concentrate on the money issues."

Gamble noted the importance of having people specifically for this because some of the gear they order is worth millions of taxpayers' dollars.

Within each division of supply, there are the simple jobs that the Marines take care of as well, noted Lance Cpl. Ricardo D. Rucker, aviation supply clerk, MALS-16.

"We have to deliver the gear to the squadrons," said Rucker, who is an augment to MAG-16 from MALS-26 based out of New River, N.C. "We also receive gear, stock it and do the inventories to keep track of all the gear."

According to Gamble, there are always little problems to deal with when deploying to any new area.

"Since being out here, we sometimes have problems with electricity," he noted. "We need it to keep our electronic databases up to speed."

The Marines, however, attack the problems and overcome them like they do anything else, he added.

"We came here over a month ago and had to set up from ground zero," he said. "It's just going to take a little time."

An asset to the Marines of supply is their camaraderie, said Rucker. This helps them overcome the day-to-day obstacles that rise up, he added.

"We all stick together, which helps stuff get done," said the Atlanta native. "It's important to have this sort of bond, because if not someone could mess something up, which could jeopardize the pilots and their crew."

This bond will help the Marines in the overall scope of being in Iraq, a hostile place, said Gamble.

"We realize that there are people that are out to get us," he stated. "However, the Marines aren't willing to back down from that. They are giving all they have."

Being in Iraq is also opening the eyes of the younger Marines to the bigger picture, said Rucker.

"Being out here makes me understand my job better," explained the 23 year old. "I understand why my job matters overall. I think you have to go through something like this to understand that."

Gamble concluded that there is one simple understanding that is the bottom line for the importance of supply to MAG-16.

"There is a mission that needs to be accomplished, and the squadrons know that you don't fly without supply," he said.



Lance Cpl. Jerrod Hubbell, aviation supply clerk, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, clearly marks the correct nomenclature of a part March 21. Hubbel, a Margaretville, N.Y., native, is currently with MALS-16 and in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. *Photo by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte* 

## Aces sneak by No Pay Due

Story by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

When the Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 Aces took on No Pay Due, a team from Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron's Finance Office, the players knew they were in for a tough game.

And after a close, point-by-point game, the Aces came out victorious, 55-54. The game only lasted for an hour, but the competition was fierce, especially with two of the top-ranked teams in the Marine Corps Community Services intramural basketball league playing each other.

"It was a hard game. We didn't know if we were going to pull it off by the end, but then there were two free-throw shots at the end of the game with 2.1 seconds left on the clock, so we fought hard," said Ace team member Emile Peterson.

Peterson said the Aces won even though a key player was injured in the second half of the game.

"It was a costly victory because we lost (one of our players) due to a knee injury toward the end, but we

wouldn't have won without him," said Peterson.

With the recent deployments, many of the teams are short of their normal players, requiring players to be flexible and substitute for many different positions, said Aces' Craig Burnett, who plays both forward and guard.

"We didn't have enough people because everybody went to CAX (Combined Arms Exercise) this week, and we had to dig deep, scrap and win," said Burnett. "We knew they only had two losses, so we were up for the game."

The Aces have won four in a row now, and according to Burnett, the rest of the teams better look out because they're coming.

The Aces, along with the other teams in the intramural basketball league, compete each week for a spot in the championship tournament at the end of the season. The teams are comprised of four or more players of varying ability levels from several squadrons aboard the station. They meet daily at both the Main Gym and Semper Fit Center to battle it out on the courts.

The winner of the championship tournament will receive a trophy, and better yet, bragging rights.



Ace player John M. Leal charges past Brian L. Haan during the team's intramural basketball match up. *Photo by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull* 

### Sports programs build bond between parents, children

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Children involved in sports do better in school, have better interpersonal skills, are more team oriented, and are for the most part healthier, according to researchers at the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports at Michigan State University.

The Miramar Youth and Teen Center offers various sports programs for dependents of all active duty military, reservists, retired military, and DoD employed civilians here. "The sports programs give kids and spouses of the deployed Marines something else to focus on," said Ronald V. Hymas, Youth Sports director here.

The Youth and Teen Center offers a wide array of sports leagues to include basketball, soccer, baseball/T-ball and flag football. There is also a cheerleading squad during the basketball and flag football season.

Each sports league is divided into different age groups ranging from ages 3 through 18

"Every member on our team gets to play,"

explained Hymas.

There are about 150-200 kids in each league. In the current basketball league there exist 130 kids divided into 13 different teams, he added.

"Everybody gets to play. Nobody sits on the bench," said Hymas. "Our teams are small, so the odds of scoring are higher. It builds confidence."

The whole purpose of the sports program is to have fun. Parents should not force their children to play if they do not want to, mentioned Hymas. "It takes more heart than skill

to succeed in our program."

According to Hymas, there exists three things that kids are most concerned about when it comes to sports: getting a chance to play, being with their friends, and having a good time. Those three things make the season a victory for each child.

More coaches are needed to help out here, stated Hymas. Anyone interested can coach a team, and they will be trained and certified

For more information, contact Ron Hymas, Youth and Teen Center, at 577-4121.

Sports — Flight Jacket March 26, 2004



The Marine Officers' Spouses Club Charity Golf Tournament held here March 12 raised more than \$10,000 for college scholarships and featured trophy awards for top finishing teams. *Photo by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull* 

# Golf tourney raises money for college

Story by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The tee-off time was 8 a.m., with golfers striving for that hole in one. This would put them in the driver's seat of a brand new Volvo during the first ever Marine Officers' Spouses Club Charity Golf Tournament here March 12.

The tournament was held to raise money for active duty spouses and their children. The golfers paid \$65 to enter, which included the price of golfing as well as lunch at the Officers' Club.

"Our goal is to raise \$7,000," said Karen Ratliff-Foss, Financial Planner with First Command, tournament sponsor.

Eighteen teams of four signed up to play, although it was overcast and participation down with the recent deployments, program coordinators were happy with the results.

"Everyone seems to be really happy to be out here, even though the weather is not cooperating with us," said Ratliff-Foss. "Golfers are always happy to play golf instead of go to work. It's like a day off, but for a good cause."

Eighteen holes were played, and when it was finished, the teams met at the Officers' Club where they enjoyed lunch and an awards ceremony.

"Prizes were given away for the first, second and third place teams with prizes such as hotel packages, restaurant gift certificates and tailor-made putters," said Ratliff-Foss.

The players enjoyed the golfing as well as the camaraderie.

"When you can play golf with your buddies and support a worthy cause, that makes for a great day," said Randy Beam, government contractor and golf tournament participant.

Nobody won the Volvo or the \$10,000 cash prize that was up for grabs if any player got a hole in one. However, the MOSC exceeded their goal of \$7,000 by raising more than \$10,000 for college scholarships.

## All-Marine Women's Basketball trials heating up competition

Story by Sgt. Joshua Stueve

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Twenty Marines from around the Corps came out to Miramar March 14 with hopes of earning one of 12 spots on the All-Marine Women's Basketball Team.

"We've had a real good turn out this year," said Head Coach James Stewart, who also coaches the men's and women's varsity teams here. "We've got Marines from Okinawa, Camp Lejeune, Twentynine Palms, Camp Pendleton, Marine Forces Reserve and even a couple from Miramar."

The team has been practicing hard for the last two weeks. Stewart works the Marines from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with the only break coming at lunch.

"We spend most of the day doing drills, increasing their endurance and covering basketball basics," said Stewart.

Stewart has also been known to take the team out to run the hills on East Miramar, a grueling physical training session for anyone who experiences it.

"I'm going to work 'em real hard," said Stewart. "They're going to be so sick of practicing that when it becomes game

See BASKETBALL, page 11

### Chapel weekly schedule of events

### Holy Family Catholic Community

- ♦ Mass: 11 a.m. Sunday, 11:30 a.m. weekdays.
- ♦ Rosary: 10:30 a.m. Sunday.
- ♦ Confession: 10:15 a.m. Sunday or for appointments call Father Berchmanz at 577-1333.
- ♦ Religious classes for children for first communion, confirmation: 9:30-10:45 a.m. Sunday.
- ♦ Youth gathering and planning following mass Sunday.
- ♦ Baptism: Normally the first Sunday of the month. Call the chaplain's office for details.
- ♦ Marriage: Call chaplain for details at least six months before wedding.
- ♦ Instruction in the Catholic faith (RCIA). Call the chaplain's office for details.
- ♦ Scripture Class: 7 p.m. Wednesday in Chapel classroom.
- ♦ Choir Practice: 6 p.m. Wednesday in Main Chapel.

### Liturgical Christian

- ♦ Sunday: Choir rehearsal at 9 a.m. Liturgical worship at 9:30 a.m.
  - Adult/Youth/Children Bible study at 10:45 a.m. Young Adults Fellowship at 5:30 p.m.
- ♦ Tuesday: Morning prayer group (Room 4) at 6 a.m. Contemporary Gospel Service at 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday: Crafts and conversation at 9 a.m. Free childcare provided.
   Women's Bible study at 10:45 a.m.
   Baptist service at 7 p.m.
- ♦ Thursday: Liturgical choir rehearsal at 7:30 p.m.
- ♦ Friday: Baptist Bible study at 7 p.m.

### Jewish

- ♦ First Friday of the month at MCRD San Diego at 7 p.m.
- ♦ Last Friday of the month in Edson Range Chapel Camp Pendleton at 7:30 p.m.

### MOSC scholarships

The Marine Officers' Spouses Club at Miramar has announced 2004 scholarships.

Applications must be received no later than Thursday.

The scholarships are not need based.

The MOSC will also award scholarships sponsored by the First Command Educational Foundation.

Recipients of the MOSC and FCEF scholarships must be spouses or children of Miramar active duty, retired or deceased military members.

Scholarship applications are avilable at

the MCAS Miramar Library or online at www.miramar.usmc.mil/mosc.htm.

### Tae kwon do team

Semper Fit is looking for members to join the Armed Forces Tae kwon do Team that will compete in the Army Invitational Tae kwon do Trials Sept. 22 to 27 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Penn.

First place finishes in the trials will qualify Marines for the military championships in Warendorf, Germany, from Oct. 4 through 13.

Applicants must present a resume with



On Jan. 12 the Miramar Station Auditorium/Movie Theater was closed for renovations for a minimum of 90 days. During this time, the theater is closed for all training and movie program opportunities.

Renovations include new carpeting, tile and seating, as well as installation of an air conditioning and heating system, a fire safety system and a new roof.

prior Tae kwon do experience and must have Kukkiwan Dan Certification (Black Belt) and a current 2004 U.S. Tae kwon do Union Membership Card.

Applications must be received by July 30. For more information, contact the Athletic Office at 577-4127.

### Midnight Madness

In celebration of National Alcohol-Free Weekend, the Single Marine Program is hosting a Midnight Madness Basketball Tournament April 3 from midnight to 7 a.m. at the Main Gym.

The event is open to all active duty servicemembers and free non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. The entry fee is \$15 per team and will be taken at The Great Escape inside building 5509.

Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place teams.

Teams must sign up by Wednesday.

For more information, visit online at www.mccsmiramar.com/SMPNew.htm.

### Royal Marines

Semper Fit is accepting applications to form an all-Marine running team to compete against a British Royal Navy/Royal Marines team at the England Half Marathon scheduled for May 27 to June 1 in Plymouth, England.

Interested Marines must submit resumes to the Athletic Office no later than Tuesday and must include dates, places and finish times of recent races, to include a marathon time within the past four months.

For more information or to obtain an application, call 577-4127.

### Sleeves up

The change of seasonal uniform for the summer period will begin April 4, at which time Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area Marines and Sailors will wear their camoflauge utilities with sleeves up.

Commanders are authorized to permit sleeves down to accommodate temperature fluctuations.



For information on deployed 3rd MAW Marines and Sailors, call the Dictaphone at 1-877-616-8762.
For more information, call 577-7397 or 7294.

### GWOTEM,

#### continued from page 2

cumstances involving grave danger of death or serious bodily injury from enemy action. Only a combatant commander can initiate a request for a battle star.

The GWOTEM will be positioned above the GWOTSM in precedence and both are before the Armed Forces Service Medal.

For more information visit online at awards.manpower.usmc.mil.

### OPSEC,

### continued from page 5

Included in the information that should not be shared are troop movements, numbers, dates, names of wounded or deceased servicemembers that have not been released by DoD and any information that may give terrorists or anti-coalition supporters the upper hand.

Keeping in contact with your family and friends is not only necessary for you but for them as well. Photos, phone calls and e-mails keep you feeling close to home, even when you're oceans away. However, think – if what you say, do or take a picture of, could in any way jeopardize the overall mission – just don't.

### BASKETBALL,

### continued from page 9

time, they're going to be extremely hungry to get out there and play."

The team is working hard for the Armed Forces Championships which are scheduled to be held here April 2 through April 10.

"The last two years have been a struggle for the team," explained Stewart.

The team's showing in the tournament the last few years proves that. They have finished in last place three of the last four years. Their best finish was a second place in the 2000 championships.

"This year we've had a real good turnout. I'm still missing some Marines I recruited, but we've got more talent this year than we've had in previous years."

Stewart said he's had a difficult time getting Marines who really belong on the team. Stewart has spent a lot of time recruiting Marines and researching players, but many times it goes for not because the player's commands won't let them go.

Even without some of the players Stewart was counting on, he still believes this year's team is far better than previous years.

"I have real high hopes for the team this year," said Stewart. "This year is going to be different. We've got a good nucleus of players that should give us a much better chance of doing well in the tournament this year."

Since the tournament is going to be held here this year, Stewart feels as though he may have a slight edge over the other services.

"We're lucky in the fact that we've got some 'home cooking' this year," said Stewart. "The games will be played at our new Semper Fit Center, and anyone can attend." In addition to having the distinction of being an All-Marine athlete, the Marines also have the opportunity to make the Armed Forces Team after the tournament. Stewart said usually five to six servicemembers will be selected from the winning team, while the rest of the services contribute two to three players each. The Armed Forces Team will compete at the Women's National Championship, which is scheduled April 21-25 in Las Vegas.

### Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society Miramar Fund Drive Donations

